

I am writing to provide comments to the FCC on the E-Rate NPRM, proceeding 13-184. E-Rate has been very important to Broward County Public Schools, the 6th largest district in the U.S., because it has helped our students and teachers gain access to a wealth of online resources, communicate and collaborate, and develop the 21st century skills necessary for college and career.

However, E-Rate funding levels have not kept pace with the needs of our district bandwidth needs. School libraries, Common Core online testing mandates, Digital instructional materials adoptions and ""Bring your own Device"" initiatives are essential to helping our students maximize learning opportunities and compete in a global economy. I urge you to raise the E-Rate funding level to at least \$5 billion per year, which is close to the average demand level for each of the past two years.

As a District Supervisor for Library Media in Florida, I know that seamlessly infusing digital learning throughout the curriculum is a prerequisite for students to graduate from high school with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in today's global economy. Access to high-speed broadband is the key to allowing modern teaching and learning to occur in all schools across the country.

In Broward we use digital learning to personalize learning, provide online classes, meet Common Core State Standards, administer online assessments, make data-driven decisions, and differentiate instruction.

An example of digital learning in Broward is our Digital 5 One to One laptop initiative. In 2013-14 school year, over 3000 fifth grades will receive a laptop in 27 schools. In our Innovations for Learning Initiatives Kindergarten and First Grade teachers in 13 schools will be using iPads, iTouches and Skype to improve literacy for our youngest learners. Across the district, teacher librarians will be building Learning Commons where teachers, students and parents can visit to and find both virtual and site-based academic support.

We continue to try to move forward with these programs, however, Broward's network is just barely keeping up with demand, and the need for a reliable high-speed network is only going to increase in the near future.

The E-Rate program has been a phenomenal success in bringing internet access to almost every classroom in America. In the last funding cycle, applications from schools and libraries requested a total of more than \$5 billion—twice the amount of available funding. I respectfully urge the FCC to increase funding for the E-Rate program to at least \$5 billion to meet this demand. All students need access to high-speed broadband. I urge you to specifically include school libraries in future funding. Our nation's future depends on equitable access. E-Rate helps us to minimize the digital divide.